United Nations S/2018/315

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 April 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 6 April 2018 from the Permanent Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to forward to you the joint statement by the Presidents of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey of 4 April 2018 (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Gholamali **Khoshroo**
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran

(*Signed*) Vassily **Nebenzia**
Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation

(*Signed*) Feridun H. **Sinirlioğlu**
Permanent Representative of Turkey

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Annex to the letter dated 6 April 2018 from the Permanent Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and Russian]

Joint statement by the Presidents of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey

April 4, 2018

President of the Islamic Republic of Iran H.E. Hassan Rouhani, President of the Russian Federation H.E. Vladimir Putin and President of the Republic of Turkey H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan gathered in Ankara on 4 April 2018 for a tripartite meeting.

The Presidents

Took note of the developments regarding Syria since their last meeting on 22 November 2017 in Sochi;

Expressed their satisfaction with the outcomes of the first year of the Astana meetings held since January 2017, underlined that the Astana format had been the only effective international initiative that had helped reduce violence across Syria and had contributed to peace and stability in Syria, giving impetus to the Geneva process in order to find a lasting political solution to the Syrian conflict;

Reaffirmed their determination to continue their active cooperation on Syria for the achievement of lasting ceasefire between the conflicting parties and advancement of the political process envisaged by the UN Security Council Resolution 2254;

Emphasized their strong and continued commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity, territorial integrity and non-sectarian character of Syria. They highlighted that none of the actions, no matter by whom they were undertaken, should undermine these principles, confirmed by relevant UN resolutions and by the will of the representatives of all segments of the Syrian society. They rejected all attempts to create new realities on the ground under the pretext of combating terrorism and expressed their determination to stand against separatist agendas aimed at undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria as well as the national security of neighboring countries;

Expressed their conviction that the Syrian National Dialogue Congress, which was convened in Sochi on 30 January 2018, constituted an important milestone in paving the way for the political process, reiterated their commitment to follow up on the results of the Congress, reflecting the will of representatives of all segments of the Syrian society, in particular the agreement to form a Constitutional Committee, supported by the UN Secretary-General and the international community. They reaffirmed their support to facilitate the beginning of the Committee's work in Geneva as soon as possible with the assistance of the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria and in coordination with three guarantor states;

Called upon the representatives of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the opposition committed to the sovereignty, independence, unity, territorial integrity and non-sectarian character of Syria as well as the international community to support the results of the Syrian National Dialogue Congress;

Expressed their conviction that there could be no military solution to the Syrian conflict and that the conflict could be ended only through a negotiated political process;

Reiterated the necessity to assist the Syrians in restoring the unity of their country and in achieving a political solution of the ongoing conflict through an inclusive, free, fair and transparent Syrian-led and Syrian-owned process based on the free will of the Syrian people and leading to a constitution enjoying the support of the Syrian people, and free and fair elections with the participation of all eligible Syrians under appropriate UN supervision;

Reaffirmed their determination to continue their cooperation in order to ultimately eliminate DAESH/ISIL, Nusra Front and all other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with Al-Qaeda or DAESH/ISIL as designated by the UN Security Council in Syria and underscored the success of their collective efforts in the fight against international terrorism;

Underlined that, in the fight against terrorism, separating the above-mentioned terrorist groups from the armed opposition groups that had joined and would join the ceasefire regime bore utmost importance with respect to preventing civilian casualties;

Welcomed the UN Security Council Resolution 2401 in response to the grave humanitarian situation all across Syria, including in Eastern Ghouta, Yarmouk, Foua and Kefraya, Idlib Governorate, Northern Hama Governorate, Rukhban and Raqqa; strongly urged the conflicting parties to comply with the provisions of the said Resolution, including by refraining from ceasefire violations;

Underscored their joint determination to speed up their efforts to ensure calm on the ground and protect civilians in the de-escalation areas as well as to facilitate rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access to these areas and emphasized that the creation of de-escalation areas was temporary as provided for by the Memorandum of 4 May 2017;

Called upon the international community, particularly the UN and its humanitarian agencies, to increase its assistance to Syria by sending additional humanitarian aid, facilitating humanitarian mine action, restoring basic infrastructure assets, including social and economic facilities, and preserving historical heritage;

Welcomed the convening of the first meeting of the Working Group on the release of detainees/abductees and handover of the bodies as well as the identification of missing persons in Astana on 15 March 2018 with the participation of three guarantors as well as the UN and ICRC, and emphasized the importance of the effective functioning of the Working Group which would help build confidence between the conflicting parties;

Decided to hold their next meeting in the Islamic Republic of Iran upon the invitation of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran H.E. Hassan Rouhani.

The Presidents of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation expressed their sincere gratitude to the President of the Republic of Turkey H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan for hosting this Tripartite Summit in Ankara.

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13 April 2018
English
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Identical letters dated 8 April 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Armed terrorist groups — including the so-called "Army of Islam" — and their supporters, financers and handlers from the Wahhabi Saudi regime, the United States administration and the colonial powers France and Britain are once again fabricating slanders, this time about the use by the Syrian Arab Army of chemical weapons in the city of Duma in eastern Ghutah. They are doing so in a shameless and failed attempt to undermine the successes achieved by the Syrian Arab Army during the past few weeks in its war against terrorism. Those successes have caused the armed terrorist groups and their handlers to become unhinged and cast about in vain for any pretext to slander the good name of the Syrian State, its army and its allied forces. Driving the armed terrorist groups out of all parts of Syria is the shared aspiration of the Syrian people, and it is being realized by the Syrian Arab Army with great determination, courage and devotion.

The Syrian Arab Republic has already warned repeatedly that armed terrorist groups might use chemical weapons and accuse the Syrian State of being the perpetrator. Over the past weeks and months, Syria has provided the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Security Council and the United Nations Secretariat with precise and documented information on attempts by terrorist groups to bring such internationally prohibited weapons into the Syrian Arab Republic. Syria has identified sites where those groups are stockpiling chemical weapons — in particular toxic chlorine — in the towns and cities of Aleppo and Idlib, and in eastern Ghutah, Duma and other places where terrorist groups still have a presence. The information that we have provided also identifies the international media agencies that, at the bidding of their handlers, have rushed to certain places in a race to be false witnesses to the alleged use of chemical weapons and accuse the Syrian Government of being the perpetrator.

The United States administration, the Wahhabi Saudi regime and the other parties supporting terrorism have issued statements that are full of lies and false and misleading claims. Those statements merely reflect the desire of those parties to save their proxies — which include the so-called "Army of Islam" and other defeated terrorist groups — and encourage them to spill more Syrian blood. They also want more illegal United States attacks on Syria, like the attack conducted by the Trump administration on the Sha'irat airbase.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that it possesses absolutely no chemical weapons of any kind, including toxic chlorine. It reiterates that it condemns the use

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of chemical weapons anywhere, anytime and under any circumstances. Syria reiterates that it cooperates fully with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to implement its obligations under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction.

These scenes being staged and directed by Western intelligence agencies and their proxy regimes in the region who have sold themselves, their resources and their peoples' capacities to serve the enemies of Syria are coming too late. The Syrian Arab Army is pressing on with its war against terrorism and the terrorist organizations that are using toxic gas to kill civilians — including the children of Ghutah, Aleppo, Khan Shaykhun and Idlib — to achieve despicable ends. Our people and the peoples of the world will be fooled no longer. The terrorists' tactic of killing innocent children with toxic gas in order to justify foreign attacks against Syria has been exposed for the cheap ruse that it is. The international community should prevent it, condemn it, and stand united against it. The Syrian Government will care for the interests of its people. It will save them from the clutches of terrorists and make sure that they are provided with the shelter, food, drink and medicine that they have been denied by the terrorist groups and their allies. To date, more than 50,000 civilians who were recently displaced from eastern Ghutah have returned to their towns and villages. The Syrian Government has ensured the return to school of more than 10,000 students who were deprived by terrorist groups of their right to education. The Syrian Arab Army is providing for the needs of families in their homes in the villages of Irbin, Siqba, Ayn Tarma and Kafr Batna in eastern Ghutah. Any allegation of chemical weapons use levelled against anybody other than the terrorist organizations and their handlers amounts to direct support for the terrorists and their crimes, and will encourage them to continue to use toxic gas against innocent Syrians. Syria calls on the United Nations, including the members of the Security Council and the Secretariat, to confront these criminals and not allow these murderers escape punishment.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative